DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 445 817 PS 028 920

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TITLE "Meet the Alpha-Soruses": A Program for Early Childhood Development. Action Research in Family and Early Childhood UNESCO Education Sector Monograph No. 12/2000.
INSTITUTION United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France). Early Childhood and Family Education Unit.
PUB DATE 2000-07-00
NOTE 22p.
AVAILABLE FROM Early Childhood and Family Education Unit, ED/BAS/ECF, UNESCO, 7 Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Communications; *Dinosaurs; Early Childhood Education; *Emotional Development; Emotional Response; Instructional Materials; *Letters (Alphabet); Program Descriptions; *Teaching Methods; *Young Children

ABSTRACT

One of the goals of UNESCO is to act as a clearinghouse on information about early childhood education activities in order to promote the development of young children. Noting that many children become frustrated with adults when they try to explain their feelings, this monograph of the UNESCO Education Sector introduces the "Alpha-Soruses" program, designed to teach young children about communication, emotional development, and the alphabet. The Alpha-Soruses is a group of dinosaurs, in the shape of the 26 letters of the English alphabet, that reflect various personalities. The program provides a communication bridge creating a way for children to express emotional reactions and opinions to adults. The monograph describes the development of the underlying concepts and research and development of the program. Also described are ways the program can be used to teach the alphabet, teach phonics, develop motor and artistic skills, build emotional security, use a nonviolent subject matter, promote self-esteem, teach teamwork, work with and accept persons with disabilities, present no gender inequalities, and build problem-solving skills. The monograph presents excerpts from three books comprising the program and describes their use with children of various ages. The three: (1) "Meet the Alpha-Soruses," a coloring book with stickers introducing the dinosaur characters through rhyme; (2) "The Alpha-Soruses in the Journey," containing stories showing children that it is good to help those in need; and (3) "Where Did the Alphabet Come From?," using the Alpha-Soruses' phonetic pronunciation and presenting a story about how the first words were formed by human beings. (KB)

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"Meet the Alpha-Soruses":

A Program for Early Childhood Development

Shanna L. Klein

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"Meet the Alpha-Soruses":

A Program for Early Childhood Development

Shanna L. Klein

U N E S C O

Action Research in Family and Early Childhood

July 2000

ED-2000/WS/26

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The authors are responsible for the choice and presentation of the facts contained in this document and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.

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Printed in UNESCO's workshop

UNESCO Activities in Early Childhood

Principle for action

Learning begins at birth. *(Article 5 - 1990 Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All)*

All children are born with the capacity to learn,
the most solid base on which any society can build.

Early Childhood Care and Education is an integral part of basic education and represents the first and essential step in achieving the goals of Education-for-All. Recent world conferences testify to a growing appreciation of the crucial importance of the child's earliest years, and of the need to support families and communities in their role as the child's most influential educator. The learning capacity and value orientations of children are largely determined by the time the child reaches the age of formal schooling. For this reason, any sustained effort in Education for All must set targets and programmes for early childhood and attempt to raise the life-skills level of families.

Improving children's health and nutrition is necessary, but increasingly, in a situation where fourteen out of fifteen of the world's children survive until the age of one, governments and civil society are turning their attention to the psycho-social and cognitive development of children. Well conceived quality early childhood programmes help meet the diverse needs of young children during the crucial early years of life, enhance their readiness for schooling, have a positive and permanent influence on later schooling achievement. In addition, countries that succeed in mobilizing local government, municipalities, communities and voluntary organizations in the care and education of young children have been able to decentralise and innovate in their educational systems and, at the same time, make an important contribution toward population information and family education.

To safeguard and promote the development of children at an age crucial for their physical, mental and emotional development, for their learning abilities and their integration into the social and education system - such is the aim of UNESCO's actions in favour of early childhood and family education.

Of the more than 800 millions 0 to 6 year old children in the world, less than a third benefit from early childhood education programmes. The challenge is thus enormous because of the demographic pressures and increased poverty that most countries experience. Yet, efficient and low-cost options for early childhood exist, and are adapted to the needs of children, the life conditions of families, the culture and resources of countries. Their implementation depends more on creating adequate political and social will than on any other factor. UNESCO focuses its advocacy and efforts on early childhood care and education, parent education and early childhood staff training, the mobilization of both modern and traditional resources, reflection, information exchange and partnership.

Goals and objectives

Within this context, UNESCO intervenes at various levels:

- at the interagency level, by participating in United Nations or other international initiatives in favour of children and families;
- at the intergovernmental level, by encouraging governments to integrate early childhood and family education programmes in their long-term social and economic planning;
- through technical assistance in the design, development and implementation of integrated early childhood programmes; as well as contributing to the improvement of the child development skills of parents and caregivers by encouraging child care information and education services, and community-based family support programmes;
- by acting as a networking centre and clearing-house on information about early childhood care and education systems, organizations, policies, programmes and activities.

UNESCO's Early Childhood and Family Education Unit

The *Early Childhood and Family Education Unit* co-ordinates research, activities and initiatives undertaken by UNESCO in early childhood care and education, parent and family education, and early childhood research.

It seeks to:

- improve access to early childhood care and education by making such programmes more widely available and accessible, and improving school-readiness;
- support family education and policy formulation by encouraging the participation and promoting the role of families and communities in basic education programmes;
- improve the content of early childhood programmes, in particular their design and quality.
- redirect and strengthen early childhood training programmes;
- strengthen the information base on early childhood by improving the availability and quality of information, research and data on young children and their families;
- promote legislation on behalf of children and families, in particular the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, through awareness raising and advocacy;
- collaborate in artistic, intellectual and cultural events promoting reflection on childhood and family issues.

Early Childhood Interventions

With the help of its specialized services, its roster of consultants, its partnership with sister agencies of the United Nations - in particular UNICEF and WHO - and the co-operation of major institutes and NGOs, UNESCO provides various services to its Member States, UN Agencies, foundations, organizations and individuals working in favour of children and families. Some of its activities include:

- supporting early childhood development/family education programmes in the Middle East, the Pacific, Latin America and South East Asia;

- publishing information and research results on early childhood topics, such as:

- *Enhancing the Skills of Early Childhood Trainers*, a training pack for the training of trainers produced with the Bernard van Leer Foundation, already published in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese and English.
- *Toward a Fair Start for Children: Programming for Early Childhood Care and Developement in the Developing World* by Dr Robert Myers, already published in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Hindi, Indonesian, Kiswahili, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese.

- sponsoring sub-regional training workshops for administrators in policy and organization of informal early childhood development systems in the Pacific, Africa and the Middle East;
- strengthening or establishing regional Early Childhood Co-operating Centres in Europe and Francophone Africa.

Family Education and Early Childhood Development

Systemic early child development programmes are an excellent investment for States, in that they raise significantly the health and educational levels of young children and allow women to enter the labour market. Children, however, always need the security and orientation which the home provides, nor should it be forgotten that societies are founded on the quality of the homes and families of which they are composed. Family education

- provides parents with the necessary knowledge and skills to raise their children successfully;
- builds up self-reliance, networking and social consciousness among parents.

Member States have much to gain from promoting family education. In situations where it is impossible to set up early childhood, centre-based programmes funded by the State, excellent child care and education can be provided through educating parents and supporting their initiatives at community level. UNESCO recommends State support for family education not only as a fruitful investment in children but also as a means of raising the educational level of a country as a whole. In a context dominated by rapid social change and by the expansion of scientific and technological knowledge, parent education is a first step toward supporting community development and education.

Early Childhood Research

UNESCO seeks to encourage the development and promotion of early childhood research by :

- promoting the development of dialogue and partnerships between researchers, early childhood professionals and decision makers.
- ensuring identification and dissemination of best practices in early childhood and family education programming.
- undertaking surveys of on-going research projects concerning early childhood issues.
- assisting those responsible for early childhood programmes in planning appropriate early childhood interventions and in improving the quality of early learning environments.
- providing advice and training on methods for collection, analysis and dissemination of early childhood information.

Early Childhood Information/Documentation Activities

To create opportunities for institutions and individuals to learn about each other's needs and actions, enhance information exchange on early childhood, and build up active relationships to benefit young children and their families, UNESCO:

- serves as a networking centre and clearing house for information on early childhood issues, policies, programmes and organizations, and as the lead agency for the *Inter-Agency Early Childhood Communication Strategy*.
- collects, compiles and disseminates basic information on early childhood care and education systems, organizations and curricula.
- maintains a data bank of early childhood care and education information.
- produces practical directories, publications, briefs and reports on early childhood care and education systems, organizations, curricula or policies.
- participates in interactive early childhood and children's rights activities on Internet, as a member of the *Children's House in Cyberspace* initiative (at http://childhouse.uio.no).
- provides input into, and support for, selected professional journals and reviews, such as the Interagency Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development's *Coordinator's Notebook*.

Further enquiries

Information on UNESCO's early childhood actions can also be consulted on Internet in UNESCO's site at http://www.education.unesco.org/ecf/index.htm.

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"Meet the Alpha-Soruses": A Program for Early Childhood Development

I. Introduction

The Alpha-Soruses is a group of dinosaurs that are in the shape of the twenty-six letters of the English alphabet. The Alpha-Soruses main objective is to teach children about communication, emotional development, and of course, the alphabet.

1. Importance of Communication

Many children become frustrated with adults when they try to explain how they feel. Children have not developed the ability to communicate on an adult level. This is why I created the Alpha-Soruses, so children have a way to learn how to clearly state how they feel.

I have come to the above conclusion after my experience working in a daycare. Children have problems communicating with not only adults, but other children as well. As they get older, they get more and more frustrated trying, so they eventually give up. By giving up on communications, children begin to withhold their emotions. By withholding their emotions, I believe they lose their ability to set free the rage that builds up inside of them. This could be the reason why teenagers are starting to commit violent acts, which must be stopped. I believe this program, if used correctly, could be a means of preventing the violence that tends to be ignited by anger in the teenage years.

2. How the Alpha-Soruses Program could help

The Alpha-Soruses program provides a communication bridge for children and adults. This is done when a child is able to relate to a character from the book. By being able to show an adult/teacher a problem or conflict that the child may experience in everyday life, the child and parent/teacher can bridge the communication gap. Opening this important communication bridge as early in a child's life as possible could be the answer to many emotional problems.

II. The beginning

When I was four years old, I drew a dinosaur out of the letter "C". This started the project my family and I named the Alpha-Soruses. When I refer to "we" during the rest of this document, I would like you to substitute it for "my family and I".

While developing the program, we said, "Let's put personalities to the letters. Then the Alpha-Soruses can help children relate to the problems they encounter as they grow". We thought about the project for a long time and began communicating with daycares, private individuals, and early elementary education teachers to see what was needed.

After two years of planning and designing the letters, we finally finished creating all of the characters. When we started to show people our characters, many told us they could see a lot of potential for a program that teaches children about emotions and personalities.

My family decided to have me file for a United States Patent in 1988. At age 6, my mother and I were awarded a patent. My mother did the final illustrations of the characters.

C, the first letter I created

III. The first public presentation of the Alpha-Soruses

Once we had received the United States Patent, we decided to display some of our many ideas at the Minnesota Inventors Congress in 1990. The Inventors Congress is one of the largest invention display shows in the Midwest region of the United States. Many representatives of manufacturers and licensing agencies were present at this show and we thought this would be a good opportunity to introduce the Alpha-Soruses project.

We were very excited by the response we received from the public concerning our products. In our display booth, we had puppets, stuffed animals, cross-stitch samples, clothing imprinted with the characters and the rough draft copy of a coloring book. There were many early childhood development representatives that stopped to talk to us. We discussed with them the ways the Alpha-Soruses project could be used and they were eager to see what we would develop in the future.

Our biggest surprise was when I received the bronze medal out of eighty-five inventions at the Minnesota Inventors Congress.

Within a year of the Minnesota Inventors Congress, we had Alpha-Soruses stickers printed and also created our first book called "Meet the Alpha-Soruses". "Meet the Alpha-Soruses" is a coloring book with the stickers previously mentioned and rhymes introducing each of the characters.

IV. The Alpha-Soruses concept: "Building a communication bridge to adults"

My concept for the Alpha-Soruses was to create a program that helps children learn the alphabet and also about their emotions and personalities. By adding personalities to the twenty-six characters, I hoped to create a way for children to speak about their feelings and express their opinions.

I feel that the Alpha-Soruses can create a conversational tool by which children could more easily relate their feelings to their parents and teachers. By creating this atmosphere, we hope to open up childrens' communication channels while they are still young so that communication can continue throughout their adolescence and adult years.

We feel that by teaching better communication at a younger age, the children will not hold in the violent feelings developed towards their peers and society. I feel that open communication is the key to solving many problems we are experiencing today.

V. Research and development of the Program

The following information was gathered through interviews and discussions in a variety of educational environments. We asked families, daycare and public education teachers to use our characters in these different environments. By receiving evaluations from parents and teaching professionals, we were able to design different concepts for the use of this program. Below are just some examples of use in each educational environment. We started our evaluation process using Book I, "Meet the Alpha-Soruses".

1. Private individual evaluations

We contacted people we knew who had young children. We gave the coloring books to the parents and asked them to read the rhymes to their children and observe their reactions.

The results were excellent. The children were very excited to see the characters and to find out about the character's personalities. The parents were surprised at how this book opened a question and answer dialog with their children almost immediately. The children would ask their parents to read the book over and over again, day after day. The children had fun placing the stickers on the pages and coloring in the characters. There were no negative evaluations received from the parents and they thought we had a good start to an educational product.

2. Daycare evaluations

Our next step was to contact some of the local daycare providers to get some objective evaluations from a teaching environment. The results were very good. The daycare providers were able to use the book as a fun teaching tool with small groups of children. The children stayed attentive and showed genuine interest because of the format of Book I.

We then asked the daycare providers about what other kinds of materials they would like to see. Many of them responded by saying puppets would be good to use so the children could act like the characters. Others said videotape adventures and cassette tapes with stories.

3. Kindergarten evaluations

With good results from the parents and daycares, we went to the local public school and asked kindergarten teachers to do an evaluation of the project. We videotaped this session and it shows the genuine interest the children had for the Alpha-Soruses. The teacher used a sampling of the students in her class, as the kindergarten class at our local school was twenty-five students. This allowed more one on one teaching possibilities for her.

The teacher was impressed with the attentiveness of the students and said that if more teaching materials would be developed, she could easily see the public school system using these characters.

4. Overview of the evaluations

The Alpha-Soruses were very well accepted by parents, daycare providers and public school teachers. Many evaluations mentioned that Book I was a good start to a teaching program. They also mentioned that if more teaching products were developed using the characters, they could easily see this used in different educational environments.

With these evaluations and suggestions, we were able to develop other ideas (see in the next section) and the next 2 books we have written. With the next 2 books and these other ideas, we feel that a very good educational tool could be developed using these characters.

VI. The Alpha-Soruses Program is unique

In relationship to other childrens' programs, the Alpha-Soruses program is unique. This program has many different possibilities for use. The main purpose, creating a communication bridge to adults, was described in a previous section. We will list many of the other possibilities to illustrate the versatility of this program.

As you will find, this program can be used to teach the basic material that children need to learn, and are being taught now. However, this program has the potential to go beyond the basics. It can be used to create a whole new variety of teaching tools which focus on the mental well being of children.

Many of the following ideas could be designed using programs which would be placed onto a floppy disk or onto a CD-ROM. The program could be written to be interactive between the child and the Alpha-Soruses. Phonics, spelling, graphics and problem solving projects are a few that come to mind right away.

1. Teaching the alphabet

Although teaching the alphabet should not seen as the main and sole purpose of these characters, in some instances it may be beneficial. A good possibility would be to use it within learning disabled or in attention deficit disorder atmospheres.

2. Teaching phonics

This program makes it fun and interesting to learn phonetic pronunciation. By having animated characters teach children, you immediately increase the attention span of the children. It is very easy to keep children interested whenever animated characters are used.

We believe that parents and teachers need to be involved in this aspect. However, videotapes and computer programs could be used as an alternative teaching tool when required.

3. Motor and artistic skills

With the use of color crayons, markers, paints and other medium, the children will develop the motor skills needed in jobs of the future. Also, this program can develop the artistic skills that many people believe are a vital part of a well rounded adult. By creating puppets, the children can do Alpha-Soruses character role playing to see what it is like to have another personality. They can learn what to do if they meet someone with a personality they do not like.

The only motor skill development of many American childrens is done through playing video games, a trend we would like to change by use of these characters.

4. Building emotional security

We feel this program could help children build emotional security. At home, with the child's family, is where the child should feel secure, more than in any other places. This is not only true about young children but also for teenagers and adults. If parents were to spend just a little time with their children every day, the benefits would be enormous.

By teaching the Alpha-Soruses to children, parents can build an unbreakable bond between themselves and their children. Again, by the use of these characters, parents can communicate with their children at their children's emotional level. We feel that the emotional development of children is lacking and this program could be the answer.

5. Non-violent subject matter

By using animal type characters, the use of violence and weapons has been eliminated. This is a very important facet of this program. With television, video games and movies influencing children more and more each year, there are very few opportunities to just teach kids about fun and teamwork. The Alpha-Soruses Program has no violence.

There are a few characters which are more of the bully types. These characters are used to teach these specific personalities to the children, not meant to create conflicts between the characters. As an example, see the characters below.

S is for Snarlo

I'm mean and I'm rough,
I'm all that good stuff.
My name is Snarlo, I'm fast as a breeze.
No Soruse better ask me to say please.

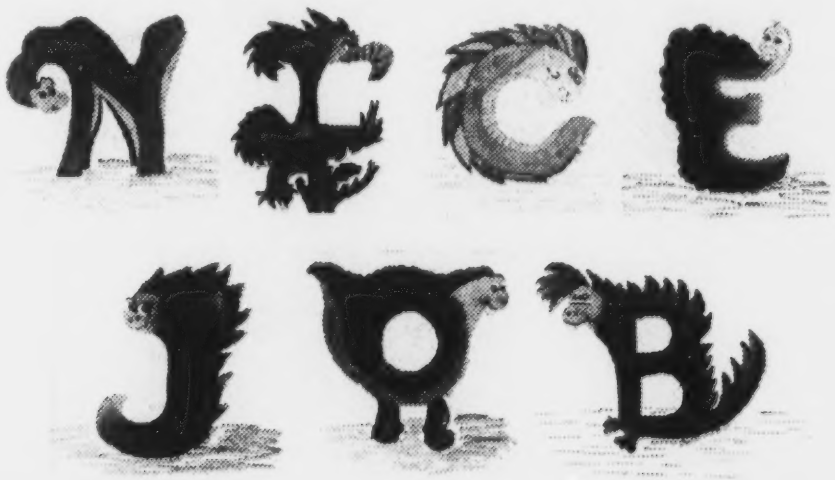
V is for Varoon

My name is Varoon and I have a plan,
I go as fast and as far as I can.
Don't get in my way, I don't want to play,
I'll just run you over and then go away.

6. Building self-esteem

By learning how the Alpha-Soruses communicate and help each other, the children can learn that they can communicate and help other children. This would be a great way for children to build their self-esteem.

By believing they can help themselves and others achieve goals and work as teams, childrens' attitudes towards life could be improved greatly. The Alpha-Soruses will give that positive attitude by showing how they work together to solve problems. When children's self esteem grows, their confidence and creative abilities will grow also.



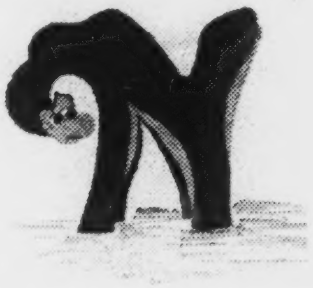
7. Learning teamwork relationships

We believe that only qualified physiatrist should be allowed to create a program for this.

Another subject could be developed to teach children to work with people who have different personalities. Teaching children this ability would allow them to feel confident when meeting or working with new people. Knowing they can work with people with different personalities than him/her, would be of great benefit to them.

Teaching the correct way, or possible ways to handle situations involving personalities could be very beneficial. The only way many children cope now is to get mad. Some never understand the importance of being able to work with other people and it affects them their entire lives.

A good example of this could be when No-No and Yessy would be assigned a task to perform. As you can see by their personalities, things could go wrong without teamwork.



N is for No-No

"No! I won't help you, no is my answer."

My name is No-No, it doesn't get any fancier.

I don't like to help, so I won't, don't you see,

Please go away, and don't bother me.

Y is for Yessy

When things go my way,

"Yes" is what I say.

"No" doesn't exist when Yessy's around,

If you say "No", you'll get a frown.

8. Working with and accepting disabled persons

As you can see by the illustrations provided below, the Alpha-Soruses each have minor personality problem and various physical disabilities. This program could be used to teach children that if they themselves are disabled, or other people they know or meet have disabilities, they can still work together as a team by each doing what they are good at. By teaching this, we feel that at an older age, the child will better accept themselves or other people around them with mental or physical disabilities, thus reducing the teasing and feelings of ill will towards other people. Society as a whole could benefit from this.

The psychological approach of my idea, the Alpha-Soruses is to have the characters work together. The characters would be grouped together to form words. They are then assigned tasks for the group to complete. However, since each character has a different personality and various physical limitation, they have to work together to complete the tasks. Here are some examples of the disabilities.

R is for Rumper

My name is Rumper and I have a stumper.
I go bumper and always loose my stumper.
I am really stumped without my stumper.
How do I shape the letter "R"?.

D is for Drago

I am Drago, I am very large.
Sometimes I feel as big as a barge.
I can hardly move, but when I do,
The whole ground shutters and I turn blue.

V is for Varoon

My name is Varoon and I have a plan,
I go as fast and as far as I can.
Don't get in my way, I don't want to play
I'll just run you over and then go away.

K is for Kronk

My name is Kronk,
All I can do is honk.
The Soruses don't know what I am trying say,
That is OK, they try anyway.

When you look at Rumper above, you will notice the stump needed to support him. This would represent a person with a cane, crutch, or wheelchair. If he was animated he would put his tail around the stump and drag it along with him as he needs his stump to support him.

Another example would be Drago above. He is so big that he can't walk. If he was animated he would have to take tiny steps and drag his body along slowly. This character represents a person who be over weight.

Varoon, shown above needs to keep moving at the time. This character represents a child that is hyper active, or a child with a short attention span.

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The character Kronk above, has trouble communicating with the other Alpha-Soruses. He only honks and cannot speak. This character represents a child that is having trouble learning to speak properly or is mute.

9. No gender inequalities

The Alpha-Soruses are not referred to as male or female. All the characters are equal team players. There are no subjects dealt with concerning gender. By eliminating the gender aspect of the characters, the situations the Alpha-Soruses find themselves in only focus on teamwork and friendship.

Refer to Hava, the letter H shown below. The verse does not identify what sex the character is, it just tells about the personality characteristic of the character.

The Hava-Soruse portrays a child who wants everything he sees. If he has to steal it, he will. But he doesn't do it to be mean or to be a criminal, it is just his personality. The character portrays a child going through a store saying to his parents, "I want one of these. Can I have one of these?"

H is for Hava

I have a cart, I have some toys,
I have everything, and that is my joy.
I want, I want and I want more,
They call me Hava, the Alpha-Sore.

Another reason we did not add the gender factor is because boys are brought up to be tough and not to show emotion. However, by locking the emotions in, boys find it hard to accept love or to openly show love to other people.

L is for Lova

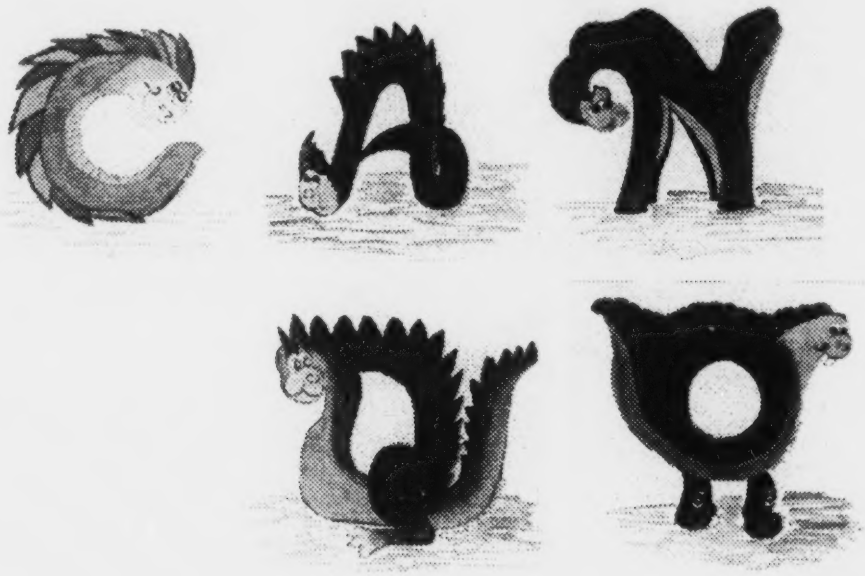
I love you, I love me,
I love the rocks and trees and bees.
My name is Lova, I have something to say,
If your around me, I'll love you all day.

An Alpha-Soruse character that could help open the emotional side of boys is Lova, the letter L. The character does not portray a female, just someone who wants to show the affection it has for everyone.

10. Problem solving skills

There are multiple ways the Alpha-Sorus characters can assist children in developing problem solving skills. Problem solving skills taught at this age can only benefit the child as he/she matures.

By using words such as "can" and "do", the Alpha-Sorus characters can be assigned a task or chore. By discussing how the characters can interact and help each other complete the task assigned, the children can learn simple problem solving skills and methods, with help from other children, parents and teachers.



VII. Use of Book I with various age groups

The Alpha-Soruse program gives ideas for different academic uses but there is no right or wrong way to teach the program. We feel the time spent with the child, especially if it is a parent is more important than the actual learning experience.

1. Two to three years old

A. Motor skills

A teacher/parent may have the child try to draw the letter. Even if the children are young, having them print the letter would expose them to the alphabet. Children can also develop their motor skills by coloring in the shape. Also, placing the sticker in the back of the book on the appropriate page with the characters would be a good form of developing association skills.

B. Phonics

Children in this age group can learn to identify the letter by the phonetic sound associated with it. The teacher/parent can pronounce the letter in short and long form and the child can learn the proper phonetic pronunciation of the letters.

2. Four to five years old

A. Motor skills

A good motor skill for this age is learning to print the letter. Also, by using story boards with felt characters, children can make up stories and learn problem solving techniques. Painting the characters and other ideas mentioned above would also be good.

B. Phonics

For this age group, identifying the letter and sound by using flash cards would be very good. The parent/teacher would show the cards and have the child pronounce the phonetic sound. Starting to put together the phonetic pronunciation of small words could also be done with this age group.

3. Six to seven years old

A. Motor skills

At this level children can learn a letter of the day. They may discuss words that begin with the letter of the day. Learning to print the letter of the day and some of the words they discussed would be good. Following that skill the parent/teacher may have the children learn how to look up words that begin with the letter of the day in an encyclopedia or dictionary. Also, they may try to paint the letter. Make the letter out of clay. Use puppets of the letters and have children create puppet shows relating to culture or any subject they want to choose. Children at this age may have fun acting out the personality of the letter or multi-letters creating a small word of there choice.

B. Phonics

Many of the ideas presented above could still be used with this age group. Depending on the ability of the child, they may be able to start reading the early education books using the phonetic pronunciations they have learned.

VIII. Introduction to Book II - "The Alpha-Soruses in the Journey"

1. Concept of Book II

The concept of Book II is to show children that it is good to help those in need. Also, learning that they can also get along with people with different personalities.

The Alpha-Soruses in the Journey tells the story of how all of the characters met and the journey they went on together to find a new home together. Along the way, the characters confront problems with various characters either needing help to get out of situations or dealing with strange personalities. They do not know what their final destination is but they use clues to help guide them.

2. Excerps from Book II

A very long time ago, there lived a group of creatures called the Alpha-Soruses. They were called the Alpha-Soruses because the shapes of their bodies looked like the alphabet of today. On a sunny warm summer day long since the dinosaurs have past on, the Alpha-Soruses began a journey to a place where they would live and learn, and this is their story. (*page 1*)

Alpha the letter "A" was a born leader, but he had no one to lead. He realized after living alone for many years that there must be more to life than being alone. He ventured out of the land he called his home to see what new friends and adventures he could discover. (*page 3*)

Alpha walked along a path he found that was created by the dinosaurs of long past. The forest was dense with new trees and shrubs. Along this path he heard a strange sound ahead. Alpha could see the top of a tree shaking furiously. He took a few steps more and saw this odd creature scratching himself against a banana tree. The creature said "Hi, my name is Brilla. Do you want to come scratch with me?" Alpha replied, " Maybe I can join you later, but now I am on a journey to meet new friends and experience new adventures. Do you want to come with me? I do not have any friends and you could be my first." Brilla said, " Yes, I would love to come along and you can help scratch my back some times. Thank you!" (*page 5*)

Alpha and Brilla were moving along farther into the valley. A sudden gush of wind went blowing by. Circu, the letter C had a strange way of moving around, rolling and rolling. Alpha and Brilla were taken by surprise! Circu stopped to say "Hello". Alpha said to Circu, "We are traveling on a journey to meet new friends and find new adventures. Would you like to come with us?" Circu said, " I would be happy to come along if you allow me to help you by being a scout. I can travel ahead and if there are any dangers, I can warn you about them." Alpha and Brilla thought that was wonderful idea and they traveled on together into the future. (*page 7*)

This is a forty-five page book. When the Alpha-Soruses finally reach their new home, Zora, the letter Z, asks them to stay and starts teaching them about life, teamwork and friendship.

IX. Use of Book II with various age groups

1. Two to three years old

In this age group children can be read the story and relate how the characters meet and help each other out during their journey to their new home. Situation by team building relationships. As the characters are disabled and work together no matter who or what culture the character maybe. The parent or teacher can also create their own ideas while working with this program. Using a picture board with felt characters, also puppets are good working tool for this age to discuss the story.

2. Four to five years old

This age group can have the story read to them and the children can discuss the situations involved as they happen. They can make up their own stories or recreate the story using puppets. They can express what they feel when the characters meet. Color pictures or using computer programs to interact with or reshape the characters.

3. Six to seven years old

The child can read the story and discuss the actions of the characters. If a computer program was available, the children could design their own characters or write their own adventure for the characters. An interactive computer program could be very useful with this age group.

The Alpha-Soruses can have different adventures on videos or computer programs. Using the characters to teach spelling and the phonetic pronunciation of the words. Teaching the children about how teamwork and friendship is so important in the world today.

X. Information on Book III - "Where did the Alphabet come from?"

1. Concept of Book III

The concept of Book III is to give children a fun way to learn more about phonetic sounds of the alphabet. We have used the characters phonetic pronunciation of the letters and written a story of how the first words were formed by human beings.

By adding the Cave Kids to the Alpha-Soruses, we can start teaching children how to pronounce words using phonetics. The Cave Kids stumble across the Alpha-Soruses in a nearby valley and they start imitating the noises the characters make. It is another fun way to keep children interested in an otherwise boring subject.

2. Excerps from Book III

Back in the time after the large dinosaurs had all disappeared there lived a group of creatures called the "Alpha-Soruses". They were related to the dinosaurs, but were a lot smaller in size. (*page 1*)

The cavemen that lived during that time were known for their drawings of animals on the walls of their caves, and also on the rocks that surrounded the caves. (*page 3*)

The cavemen and their families lived in a valley that was over the mountains from the Alpha-Soruses' home. The cave kids would sometimes go over the mountain to play. (*page 5*)

One day while playing, the cave kids happened across a hidden valley. In that valley the kids found the "Alpha-Soruses" going about their everyday lives. (*page 7*)

These are the first few pages of the book to give an example of the begining of the story. The book would help children better understand the phonetic pronounciation of the words and help them learn to speak and read.

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XI. Use of Book III with various age groups

1. Two to three years old

While reading the book to the children, the parents or teachers can have the kids identify the letter and pronounce the phonetic sound associated with it. When they are done reading the book, the parent or teacher could put together small groups of letters and have the children try to pronounce it correctly, while having fun with animated characters.

2. Four to fve years old

Children in this age group can work with parents or teachers by learning to pronounce letters, vowels and consonants while identifying the letters. A speech therapist would be able to create the study program for teaching disabled children. At this age, children could possibly start pronouncing larger words.

3. Six to seven years old

Children in this age group can read and discuss the story.

XII. Overview of the Alpha-Soruses Program

The "Alpha-Soruses" program can benefit children around the world by learning how to communicate with adults. It can help them build self-esteem. It can improve their relationships with other people.

By the age of six and seven, children will know how to express their feelings to adults. By teaching them this important facet of life, hopefully they can release the violent feelings they may hold within themselves. The better a child can communicate at a younger age, the more confident they will be with themselves in adolescence and adulthood.

We believe if the right people were to create a program using the ideas presented in this document, the benefits to young people all around the world would be immeasurable.

Communication is the key to a better life!